
**Rombo Mountain Fire
Bitterroot National Forest
News Release**

Northern Rockies
Incident Management
Team
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Incident Commander

For Immediate Release

**Contact: Fire Information
406-821-0082**

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Rombo Mountain Fire Grows to 13,000 Acres

West Fork, Mont. – The Rombo Mountain Fire grew an estimated 1,926 acres on Friday to 13,000 acres. Higher relative humidity and no significant thunderstorm development in the immediate fire vicinity moderated fire behavior to single tree and group tree torching, short duration crown fire runs and short range spotting. Primary spread was to the east, southwest and northwest. The fire was caused by lightning on July 31 and is located 16 miles south of Conner, MT and 4 miles northeast of Painted Rocks Lake.

Crews and equipment continued to improve and hold direct and indirect line on the west side of the fire. Hose lay was completed on this line. Helicopter bucket drops were used to hold the fire east of this line and to reduce fire spread to the southwest. Engine crews patrolled and mopped up the west line last night and will continue Friday night. Ground and aerial recon identified a location for a dozer line to limit fire growth to the east towards Highway 93 and significant values to be protected. Structure protection equipment was installed along the West Fork River from Beavetail road south to Painted Rocks State Park. Structure protection assessments began along the south end of Highway 93 and south of Painted Rocks State Park.

Operations planned for Saturday are to continue to keep the fire east of the 5715A road and utilize helicopter bucket drops as necessary; contain any spot fires across the fire line; conduct burnout operations from Rombo Creek north towards the 2000 Fat Creek Fire only if weather conditions are favorable; begin dozer line construction in the Porcupine Saddle vicinity to reduce the potential of fire spread to the east reaching values to be protected along Highway 93; complete installation of structure protection equipment from Beavetail Road south to Painted Rocks State park; and continue structure protection assessments south of Painted Rocks State Park.

For public safety a new closure order was issued on Friday . The area description is: All Bitterroot National Forest System Lands within the following described area: Starting at the Forest Boundary on Road 49 (Piquett Creek Road) going northeast past Trapper Creek Job Corps Center; then following the Forest Boundary going southeast along Highway 93 to Lost Trail Pass and the boundary line with the Salmon National Forest. Then following the Bitterroot National Forest Boundary going west to the Sula/West Fork Ranger District boundary. Continuing to the Saddle Mountain area; then southwest on Trail 606 to the junction with Trail 650; continuing south to Hughes Creek road (9630), continuing west to the West Fork road at Alta and then following the Forest Boundary north to the beginning. This includes Bitterroot National Forest System Lands east of the West Fork road. The area closure excludes Warm Springs and Indian Trees Campgrounds. Forest officials ask the public to cooperate with the closure for public and firefighter safety. Maps and area closure descriptions are available at Forest offices, and on line at www.fs.fed.us/r1/bitterroot. The Forest is under Stage 2 fire restrictions which prohibit campfires and smoking other than in a vehicle, building or cleared area due to the high fire danger. Previously issued Stage I Pre-evacuation Notices remain in effect.

Though there are a number of active fires with necessary closures, most of the Bitterroot National Forest is still open for hiking and fishing. Contact your nearest Ranger District Office or the Bitterroot National Forest Supervisor's Office for current recreation activity opportunities.

A total of 183 personnel are assigned to the fire and additional firefighting crews, helicopters, and equipment to provide support have been requested, but may not be available due to the large number of fires burning in Montana and other states at this time.

Public and firefighter safety are the highest priority that Svalberg's incident management team, in coordination with the local forest personnel, take into consideration when planning and implementing fire management actions.

For additional information call Rombo Mountain Fire information at 821-0082 or visit the website, www.inciweb.org.

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